

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/NE
THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20540

RDS for ID. DATE
TS. DATE
EXCISE DATE 20 November 1978
DECLASSIFIED DATE
RECLASSIFIED DATE
EXCISE DATE

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: War Powers Reporting and the November 1978 Evacuation of
US Citizens and Bodies of US Citizens from Guyana

1. On 19 November 1978, acting under the authority of the National Command Authority, US military aircraft landed in Guyana to initiate an evacuation of wounded US civilians and the bodies of US civilians, including the body of Congressman Leo Ryan (D-Calif). The evacuation was necessitated by an ambush of Congressman Ryan's party at Jonestown, Guyana. The ambush was reportedly conducted by members of the American religious community at Jonestown.

2. More specifically, an Air Force C-141 departed Guyana yesterday with approximately 10 wounded for evacuation to the US; an Air Force C-130 was on the ground in Guyana with augmentation personnel for the US Embassy in Georgetown; and an Air Force C-141 is presently on the ground in Georgetown with medical teams and poison specialists aboard for the purpose of providing service to surviving US citizens at Jonestown. Present plans call for sending a U-21 aircraft to provide service for the US Embassy, and a C-130 aircraft loaded with supplies (rations, blankets, cots, etc.) for use by the local Guyanese military element. There is no military attache or other US military personnel permanently located in Guyana. In all, approximately 265 military personnel will be temporarily located in Guyana incident to the evacuation of bodies of US citizens and/or evacuation of US citizens who wish to return to the US. There have been no hostilities in the area in which US military personnel will be committed, and hostilities are not expected. Aircraft are not armed or otherwise equipped for combat. US military personnel are not equipped for combat--only side arms will be carried. The entire effort is directed at providing support, protection, etc., to US citizens located in Guyana. All US military personnel will be extracted upon completion of the evacuation.

3. A report under the provisions of the War Powers Act (PL 93-148) is not required for the following reasons:

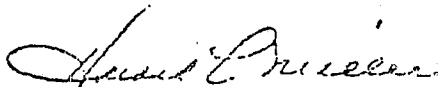
a. Neither the aircraft nor personnel involved are equipped for combat or otherwise armed (except for side arms carried by personnel). Thus, the operation indicated above does not fall within the criteria established by Subsections (1), (2), or (3) of Section 4(a) of the Act.

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b. There were never any hostilities in Guyana. Hostilities are not anticipated, and the introduction of approximately 265 military personnel and about 5 aircraft not equipped for combat would not "substantially enlarge" US armed forces "equipped for combat" already located in Guyana.



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